Business Analysis of Findings & Preliminary Recommendations

OVERVIEW

Based on feedback gathered from the Regional Presentations, the following business analysis offers an overview to general themes the team encountered while at the regional presentations. In addition, the preliminary recommendations provide a series of suggested next steps, based on regional demand, for implementing the regional vision.

The business analysis and recommendations are meant to serve as a catalyst for the Career Zone management team to discuss and develop the regional vision of the Career Zone as the management team deems appropriate. The Regional Vision Planning Meeting document outlines how this discussion should be facilitated.

The business analysis and recommendations are not meant to be comprehensive, but rather to provide a starting point for further discussion and deeper analysis. They illustrate how both the quantitative and qualitative data found in Results Tracking Matrix may be used to analyze regional demands and determine possible implementation strategies.

BUSINESS ANALYSIS

The following business analysis has been structured by general themes of topics and feedback gathered from the regional presentation feedback forms and comments from participants to Career Zone presenters. It is recommended that the team review the following business analysis and use the themes listed below to facilitate a discussion of additional themes apparent in the regions. Once completed, the team should use the themes to establish an Action Plan for implementing the regional vision.

### 1) SFA Employees Believe the Career Zone Is Relevant to Their Work

Seventy six percent (76%) of employees who attended the regional presentations felt the information presented was applicable to their current work environment. The Regional Presentations succeeded in building awareness of the Career Zone.

- *"I'm glad the Career Zone is informing- it will open potential for growth opportunities." (San Francisco)*
- *"It presented the foundation of a new process. Well done." (Dallas)*

2) Course Offering Demands Vary Across Regions

➢ Each region has communicated unique needs and services they would like the Career Zone to bring to them. Therefore, when forming the regional vision, the Career Zone Leadership Team should consider the feedback from each region separately. For example, if one were to compare Philadelphia and San Francisco, they would notice a disparity in the types of classes requested. To illustrate, the data suggests Philadelphia is more interested in courses focused on the Business of SFA and Project Management, as opposed to San Francisco.

- *Philadelphia – 75% interest in Business of SFA; 63% interest in Project Management*
- *San Francisco – 46%interest in Business of SFA; 33% interest in Project Management*

➢ In multiple regions, the employees expressed demand for more Business of SFA courses that focus on providing job-specific skills associated with their daily work.

- *"Specific Title IV training like COD and Pell. Instead of some high-level, non-specific overviews [that] we get, we need concentrated detailed training about how schools will use these systems and programs on a day-to-day basis." (Philadelphia)*

> Although demand varies, the data suggests consistent high interest in Career Management and Communications type courses. The Career Zone may want to consider blanket purchase agreements for such courses. (See Graph)
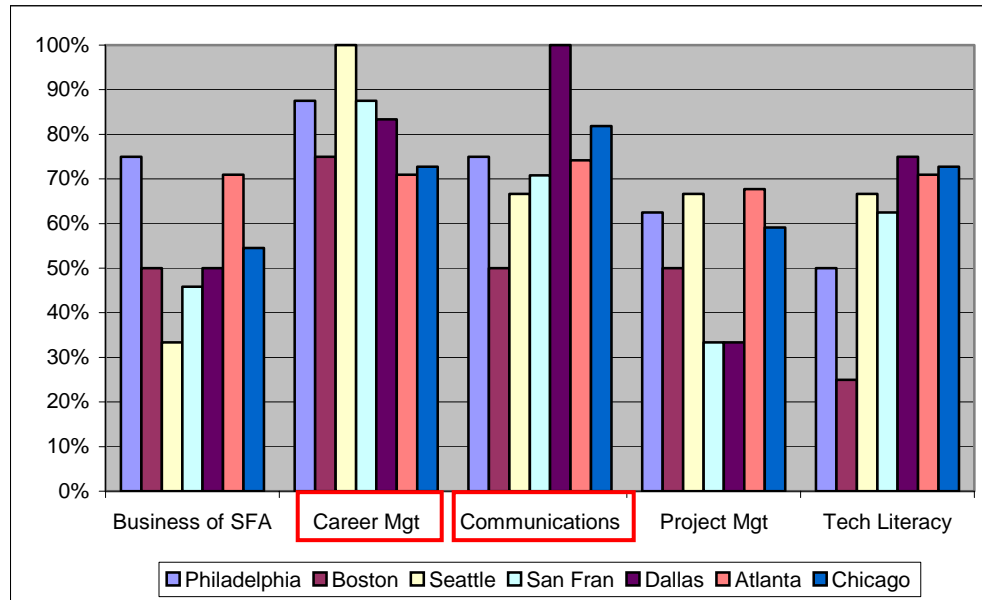
3) Strong Support for Career Management Services as Well as Course Offerings

In addition to Career Management courses, employees have expressed the need for Career Management services that are specific to SFA. Across the regions, employees are asking for Career Management counseling and services to help them guide their career within the framework of SFA's PBO environment.

- *"One-on-one support to develop a career road map is valuable." (Denver)*
- *"Information on where the needs are – and where the jobs are in SFA." (Seattle)*
- *"Classes on improving my interview skills." (San Francisco)*
- *"Career change training; for example going from a debt collector to Human Resources." (Atlanta)*

4) Regions Require Feedback Opportunities To Build Ownership

The regional presentations were important to build buy-in and awareness of the mission and services offered. Therefore, it is critical that the further communication is required with the regions once specific offerings are made available to reach out to obtain additional feedback and a better understanding of demand. Career Counselors should also consider traveling to the regions on a regular basis to continue to build rapport with employees.

- *88% feel the information presented helped to better understand the Career Zone*
- *"Thanks for coming to the regions and asking what we want/need" (San Francisco)*
- *"Shows we are trying to move in a different direction. We do not have all the answers yet." (Chicago)*
- *"Before I feel capable of responding, I need to know what will be available in the regions." (Atlanta)*

5) Manager buy-in critical

Employees recognize that they cannot take classes or pursue career plans without manager support. In turn, managers are asking for guidance in this area. The Career Zone must continue to communicate with managers about Career Zone offerings and partner with SFA leadership to develop guidelines. In addition, the Career Zone should continue to integrate its services with existing manager programs.

- *"How should a manager approve a non-job related course? How do managers find a balance between allowing employees to go to training and completing their work?" (San Francisco)*
- *"For the Career Zone to succeed SFA needs to promote a culture in which management sees employee development as beneficial to the organization. Untrained managers can be an obstacle for staff who are pursuing professional development." (Boston)*

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations should be considered as suggested next steps, based on the analysis of regional demand. They should be considered as input to the action plan that the management team will develop.

➢ *Offer flexible training and counseling delivery methods*
The smaller regions recognize the challenges involved in providing traditional classroom training to small groups. Therefore, the Career Zone should consider non-traditional training delivery methods such as web based off-the-shelf training, web casts, and CD-ROM computer based training (CBTs).

➢ *Solicit a Career Zone Champion for each region*
A Career Zone Champion should be identified in each region. The Career Zone Champion will serve as the communication link between the region and the Career Zone manager. The Champion will also help identify potential offerings the Career Zone would provide to meet specific needs in the region.

➢ *Utilize SFANet to rank classes for others to view*
The Career Zone web site should include a function that allows employees to rank and submit feedback on courses they have taken; similar to popular web sites in the private sector (eg. Amazon.com). This feature should also include a function for employees to rank outside vendor courses taken in order to better utilize their Learning Coupons.

➢ *Approach each region's Career Zone a separate and unique entity*
As the Business Analysis suggests, each region is unique and has different demands.   The Career Zone Leadership must follow up with each region to validate the feedback. The Career Zone must consider each region as a separate entity and take caution not to assume what works in one region will work in another. It is recommended a decision making process be developed that will standardize how the Career Zone will consider requests from the regions.

➢ *Involve external stakeholders and leverage existing relationships in the regions*
The Career Zone must recognize and leverage the relationship TDC has developed with employees in the regions. It is critical that TDC and the regional training coordinators are kept informed and encouraged to help shape the regional Career Zone services. Career Zone and TDC must establish a uniform process for managing employee requests. A working session should be set up with TDC to establish clear roles and responsibilities.